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Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/200, entitled "Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries". It contains the outcome of the monitoring by the Secretary-General of the imposition of such measures and an analysis of their impact on the affected countries, including the impact on trade and development. The report reflects the replies of Member States and selected international organizations (set out in the annex) to the note verbale sent by the Secretary-General requesting pertinent information. The report also includes additional data collected by the Secretariat.

The responses from Member States indicate their positions against the imposition of unilateral economic measures as an instrument of political and economic coercion against developing countries. Such measures are viewed as being in conflict with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the norms of international law and the rule-based multilateral trading system, and they infringe the sovereignty of States. Member States expressed their concerns about the negative impacts of unilateral economic measures on the socioeconomic development of the affected countries. International organizations reported that unilateral sanctions tend to adversely affect the population in the affected countries and hamper international trade. The number of unilateral economic measures has increased in recent years.

* A/70/150.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/200, entitled "Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries". In the resolution, the Assembly urged the international community to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries that were not authorized by relevant organs of the United Nations or were inconsistent with the principles of international law as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and that contravened the basic principles of the multilateral trading system.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue monitoring the imposition of such measures, study their impact on the affected countries, including the impact on trade and development, and report on the implementation of the resolution to the Assembly at its seventieth session.

3. Accordingly, the Secretariat, in a note verbale dated 1 April 2015, invited the Governments of all Member States of the United Nations to provide their views and relevant information regarding the existence of unilateral sanctions and the impact these may have had on their trade and development. The replies received from 20 Member States are reproduced in annex I to the present report.

4. Relevant organizations, programmes and agencies both inside and outside the United Nations system were also invited to provide information and analyses concerning recent developments in the subject area. The replies received from three organizations are summarized in annex II to the present report.

II. Summary of replies received from Member States, United Nations bodies and international organizations

5. Member States expressed their positions against the imposition of unilateral measures. Unilateral economic measures are considered to be violations of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the norms of international law and the rules-based multilateral trading system. They also infringe the sovereignty of States. According to the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States,[1] "no State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights".

6. Member States that identified themselves as countries affected by coercive economic measures (the Central African Republic, Cuba, Latvia as a member of the European Union, Madagascar, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Zimbabwe) reported negative impacts of such measures on their trade. In particular, these Member States indicated that unilateral sanctions tended to have severe humanitarian consequences and adverse effects on vital economic sectors of the affected countries, thereby harming the welfare of the population. They expressed their concerns about the negative impacts on their long-term socioeconomic development and requested other Member States to refrain

[1] General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV).

from resorting to such measures. Other respondents also expressed their concerns about the adverse impact on the economic development and living standards of both the targeted and non-targeted countries.

7. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) reported that some of the economies it monitors, those of Madagascar, Mali, Guinea-Bissau, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, had been negatively affected by economic sanctions.

8. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) indicated that unilateral sanctions had hampered trade and development in the Syrian Arab Republic. ESCWA suggested that a revised approach to economic sanctions was needed, preserving the viability of State institutions and public administration in supplying essential goods and services, and acknowledging the importance of local stakeholders in providing essential products and services. When advocating a new approach to sanctions based on the urgent humanitarian and institutional crisis, strong international support was necessary.

9. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reported that unilateral measures had had significant negative effects on Cuba, and possibly on third States. Substantial losses had been incurred by the Government, enterprises and citizens in obtaining critical goods and services, including medicine and food. Sanctions had severely limited the development of strategically important sectors, such as information and communications technology.

III. Monitoring the imposition of unilateral measures and studying the impact of such measures on the affected countries

10. Since 2000, new sanctions have been imposed 38 times on 35 targets (see table below). Of those measures, 14 are no longer in effect.

Unilateral economic measures imposed during the period 2000-2015

	Target	*Year in which the sanction was imposed*	*Year in which the sanction was removed*
1	Belarus	2006	2008
2	Belarus	2010	–
3	Central African Republic	2003	2005
4	Central African Republic	2014	–
5	Côte d'Ivoire	2004	–
6	Cuba	1960	–
7	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	2008	–
8	Democratic Republic of the Congo	2003	–
9	Egypt	2013	2014
10	European Union	2014	–
11	Fiji	2006	2014
12	Georgia	2006	2013
13	Guinea	2005	2010

	Target	*Year in which the sanction was imposed*	*Year in which the sanction was removed*
14	Guinea-Bissau	2003	2004
15	Guinea-Bissau	2012	2014
16	Haiti	2001	2005
17	Honduras	2009	2009
18	Iraq	2012	–
19	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	1987	–
20	Lebanon	2007	–
21	Liberia	2007	–
22	Libya	2011	–
23	Madagascar	2010	2014
24	Mali	2012	2012
25	Moldova	2012	–
26	Myanmar	1997	–
27	Occupied Palestinian Territory	2007	–
28	Somalia	2010	–
29	South Sudan	2014	–
30	Sudan	2004	–
31	Syrian Arab Republic	2003	–
32	Tunisia	2011	2011
33	Uganda	2014	–
34	Ukraine/Russia	2014	–
35	Uzbekistan	2005	2009
36	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	2015	–
37	Yemen	2012	–
38	Zimbabwe	2001	–

Source: United Nations Secretariat; based on various sources.

11. The number of unilateral economic measures has increased in recent years. Between 2000 and 2009, 18 measures were initiated (i.e., an average of 1.8 per year), with 17 new measures introduced since 2010 (an average of 2.8 per year). Re-establishment of economic relations in long-standing cases, such as Cuba and Myanmar, has been initiated but had not yet concluded as of mid-2015.

12. Recent trends suggest that the use of smart (or targeted) sanctions, such as arms embargoes, asset freezes and travel bans, has been increasing, although broadly-defined trade embargoes still exist. Empirical evidence indicates that unilateral measures, especially broad trade embargoes, can have severe unintended consequences, such as adverse impacts on human rights, public welfare and the long-term growth prospects of the affected country.[2]

[2] See A/HRC/27/32 and A/69/97.

Annex I

Replies received from Member States

Brunei

[Original: English]
[27 April 2015]

Brunei does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries.

Brunei has not been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014.

Cambodia

[Original: English]
[10 June 2015]

Cambodia's position is against the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. Cambodia is of the view that the imposition of such coercive measures violates the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, according to which no State may use or encourage the use of unilateral economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights. In addition, it contravenes the rules of the World Trade Organization, especially those concerning the basic principles of the multilateral trading system, aimed at preventing trade discrimination. Finally, the coercive measures adversely impact international economic cooperation and the development efforts of developing countries. Cambodia considers that unilateral economic measures are not admissible and should not be taken against any countries, including developing nations. Cambodia urges that these be eliminated and therefore requests a recorded "yes" vote on resolution 68/200.

Cambodia has not been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014.

Central African Republic

[Original: French]
[28 April 2015]

The imposition of coercive economic measures is not the best means of exerting pressure on States, since these countries are under intense economic pressure. Sanctions affect the population rather than the political leaders who caused them to be imposed. Such measures affect the country's economy, and the poorest people suffer the consequences while their leaders maintain a normal lifestyle, as essential commodities become very expensive. This also leads to the impoverishment of the middle class, a decrease in trade volume and a decline in standards of living.

Financial sanctions affect contributions to the national treasury, since tax revenues fall as a result of the downturn in the economy, particularly in trade. As the private sector is not well developed in the Central African Republic, it is often the salaries of government officials that keep the money supply flowing. As public funds dry up, salary arrears begin to accumulate, and traders and farmers can no longer sell their products. The embargo on goods leads to a rise in prices that has a serious impact on those who are less affluent (the majority). It is therefore essential to stop the application of coercive measures and find alternatives.

Chile

[Original: English]
[13 May 2015]

Chile does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries.

Chile has not been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014.

Congo

[Original: English]
[5 May 2015]

The Congo does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. The use of such measures, unfortunately, harms the economies of developing countries and has negative effects on international cooperation.

The Congo still believes that the international community should take effective and binding measures for ending the use of coercive measures that go against the United Nations goals and principles. The Congo reaffirms its commitment to the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. No State may impose unilateral economic, political or any other type of measures or encourage their application in order to coerce another State to carry them out.

Cuba

[Original: English]
[16 April 2015]

Cuba does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. The Republic of Cuba rejects all unilateral economic coercive measures, since they are inconsistent with the principles of international law as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and contravene the basic principles of the multilateral trading system. Cuba considers that such measures directly violate the sovereignty of developing countries, and that they hinder the advancement of national development programmes and the achievement of better social and economic realities.

Cuba has been affected by the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America since 1962.

For over 50 years, the United States Government has imposed a blockade policy on Cuba, ignoring the systematic and growing clamour of the international community to immediately put an end to it.

In spite of President Obama's recent steps towards the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba and his statement regarding his intention to embark on a debate with Congress aimed at ending the blockade, at present the blockade and its extraterritorial scope are firmly upheld by the United States Government. This has manifested itself particularly in the unprecedented harassment of Cuban banking and financial activity over the past few years. Consequently, Cuba's normal progress in all spheres of economic, social, cultural and political life continues to be seriously hindered.

The blockade inflicts important adverse effects on the material, psychological and spiritual well-being of the Cuban people and imposes serious obstacles on its economic, cultural and social development.

By virtue of this policy, Cuba continues to be unable to freely export and import products and services to or from the United States and cannot use the United States dollar in its international financial transactions or hold accounts in that currency in third-country banks. It is also not allowed to have access to loans from banks in the United States, from their branches in third countries or from international financial institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Inter-American Development Bank.

There is not one single sphere of economic and social activities of the Cuban people that is exempt from the destructive and destabilizing action imposed by this illegal policy.

The Cuban health system is an area that particularly suffers from the permanent lead weight of the United States genocidal blockade, causing severe adverse effects on the health and well-being of the Cuban people. This basically includes the need to obtain medicines, reagents, spare parts for diagnostic and treatment equipment, instruments and other supplies in distant countries, often making it necessary to resort to intermediaries in distant markets and thereby unnecessarily increasing costs for the sector.

Although just a few of these adverse effects can be calculated in monetary terms, no figure, no matter how high, can show or explain the intangible costs of the damage of social and human significance, given the impossibility of being able to access state-of-the-art supplies, technology, knowledge and other resources that are vital for this sensitive area.

In Cuba, one of the most comprehensive social protection programmes has been established, permitting the eradication of hunger. The population's food security, closely related to the economic, social and environmental development dimensions, is a strategic priority for Cuba. Nevertheless, the State policy carried out by the United States for more than five decades against Cuba violates the right to food of the Cuban people, since it sets up obstacles to regular access for Cubans to international food markets, including United States producers.

In the current circumstances, the blockade is being built as a serious barrier to granting loans to Cuba under favourable conditions, transferring cutting-edge technology, mobilizing external capital, attracting direct foreign investment, protecting the environment and fully integrating Cuba into the world economy.

Losses borne by the Cuban economy each year total billions of dollars generated by lost incomes from exports of goods and services; expenses caused by the geographical relocation of trade, especially that derived from frozen assets and the adverse monetary and financial effects of the exposure of economic actors to exchange rate variations (the dollar cannot be used in any payments) and the increased cost of financing.

One of the sectors most affected by the blockade is the tourism industry and the economic activities associated with it, such as services, travel agency operations and logistical support, areas that are decisive in this sector. By virtue of the blockade laws, the Cuban tourism industry cannot enter the United States market, which sends tourists in an organized manner; this includes cruises and the use of Cuba's marinas and water sports facilities.

The economic damage caused to the Cuban people as a result of the application of the economic, commercial and financial blockade of the United States against Cuba, taking into consideration the depreciation of the dollar in regard to the price of gold and the international market, totals $1,112,534,000,000 in spite of the decreased price of gold as compared with the year 2013.

There are numerous examples of unilateral economic coercive measures in the world, all of them in violation of international law as provided for in the Charter of the United Nations. The blockade of the United States Government against Cuba is the longest set of unilateral economic coercive measures ever to be applied in history. This policy and its extraterritorial scope have tried to isolate our country simply because it defends its sovereignty and its right to freely choose its future.

Such a policy comes as no surprise since the kernel of the United States blockade against Cuba resides in the following words: To bring about "hunger, desperation and overthrow of [the Cuban] Government".[3]

The complicated and multi-branched body of laws and political and administrative regulations that codify the blockade has not been removed. Much to the contrary, it has been strengthened and its validity reaffirmed. The annual extension of the Trading with the Enemy Act, passed as a war measure in 1917 to restrict trade with nations considered to be hostile, is an eloquent example of this. On 5 September 2014, President Obama once again renewed this policy of aggression and hostility towards Cuba.

Cuba and the United States are not at war. Cuba has never launched any military aggression against the United States, nor has it promoted acts of terrorism against the American people. It is unsustainable to justify the measures being taken under this ordinance.

The blockade also qualifies as an act of genocide by virtue of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948 and as an act

[3] Lester D. Mallory, "Memorandum From the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Mallory) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Rubottom)", 6 April 1960, United States Department of State.

of economic warfare according to the Declaration concerning the Laws of Naval War, adopted by the Naval Conference of London of 1909.

The blockade against Cuba must end. It is the most unfair, severe and prolonged unilateral system of sanctions that has ever been applied to any country. On 23 occasions, the General Assembly, with an overwhelming majority, has declared itself to be in favour of respect for international law, compliance with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the right of the Cuban people to choose their own future for themselves. That must be respected.

Ecuador

[Original: English]
[4 May 2015]

Ecuador does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. Ecuador considers the imposition of unilateral economic measures to be a transgression against the principle of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of United Nations Member States.

Ecuador has not been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014.

The imposition of unilateral economic sanctions as a form of political and economic pressure threatens the principles of non-interference and equality among Member States, as well as the principle of sovereignty, contained in the Charter of the United Nations. Ecuador has expressed itself accordingly when such sanctions have occurred, as is the case with Cuba, Iran and Venezuela. It is also important to note that such sanctions affect the principle of presumption of innocence, as they are applied on a discretionary basis without proper investigation or judicial order.

Latvia

[Original: English]
[29 April 2015]

Latvia does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries.

Latvia has been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014. An embargo was imposed on 6 September 2014 by the Russian Federation on imports of beef, pork, poultry, fish, fruit, vegetables, cheese, milk and other dairy products from the European Union, including Latvia.

In 2013 Latvian exports of goods to the Russian Federation amounted to €1,163.1 million, which was 11.6 per cent of total Latvian exported goods; 4.5 per cent of that was included in the Russian Federation's sanctions list. The share affected by Russian embargoes was 0.5 per cent of total Latvian exports of goods or 0.2 per cent of the gross domestic product of Latvia. This has a potential direct impact on the manufacturers of Latvian goods.

Madagascar

[Original: English]
[22 May 2015]

Madagascar does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries.

Madagascar was affected by the suspension of eligibility for the benefits of the African Growth and Opportunity Act by the United States of America during 2010-2014. The sanctions are no longer effective.

The Act is a non-reciprocal trade preference programme that provides duty-free treatment to United States imports of certain products from eligible sub-Saharan African countries. Madagascar was no longer considered eligible and its participation was suspended on account of the political crisis that resulted from a "coup" that overthrew a democratically elected president. As a result, all "Zone franche" textile manufacturing enterprises were closed and thousands of jobs were lost. The poverty rate increased to 75.3 per cent (poverty headcount ratio at national poverty lines, percentage of population) according to the World Development Indicators by the World Bank. The economic growth from 1995 to 2008, with the exception of 2000, dropped from 7.1 per cent to 3.7 per cent, with an outlook of 5.4 per cent for 2015, according to the African Development Bank Group.

Political events or political crisis should not be considered a condition for the suspension of the commercial or trade activities of a developing country, in view of the social and humanitarian consequences and the direct impact on the economic development of that country, which ultimately affects not only the Government but also its populations, who suffer the most.

Mongolia

[Original: English]
[6 April 2015]

Mongolia does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries.

Mongolia has not been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014.

Oman

[Original: English]
[8 June 2015]

Oman does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. The Sultanate of Oman believes that the use of economic sanctions against developing countries is inconsistent with the principles of international law and the basic principles of the multilateral trading system as referred to in the Secretariat's note Oman has never been subjected to any economic measures from any country and has never used such measures against any country, nor does the Sultanate of Oman

agree with the imposition of economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries.

Oman has not been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014.

Paraguay

[Original: English]
[23 April 2015]

Paraguay does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries.

Paraguay has not been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014.

Measures and instruments of coercion should be applied only after general debate according to international law, among all members of the international community and/or the United Nations Security Council. Such measures should be carefully regulated.

Senegal

[Original: English and French]
[20 April 2015]

Senegal does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. The foreign policy of Senegal is designed to achieve people-centred economic development and respect for and protection of human rights. This policy continues the quest for peace and stability, as well as the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Senegal has not been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014.

Sri Lanka

[Original: English]
[13 May 2015]

Sri Lanka does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. Sri Lanka does not approve of the use of unilateral economic measures against any country, as it is inconsistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Sri Lanka is of the view that the implementation of such measures impedes the rule of law; the transparency of international trade and freedom of trade and navigation.

Sri Lanka has not been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014.

Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]
[30 April 2015]

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic categorically rejects the policy of imposing unilateral coercive measures, whether economic, commercial or financial, outside the framework of international law, against Member States, in particular against developing countries, for the purpose of achieving narrow political ends. It also rejects the pretexts used by States that impose such measures to justify their conduct.

The views of the Syrian Government rejecting such measures are consistent with the unequivocal calls by the United Nations in its annual resolutions, the most recent of which are General Assembly resolutions 68/200 and 69/180, on all Member States to refrain from imposing any unilateral economic measures against other States, in particular against developing countries. It is also consistent with the affirmation by the United Nations that such measures are contrary to the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principle of respect for the sovereignty of States, and to the principles of multilateral trade law. The United Nations has also warned against the disastrous impact of such measures on the efforts of Member States to achieve development for their peoples; the impediments they pose to the rights of the peoples of the affected States, in particular children and women, to economic and social development, a standard of living adequate for their health and well-being, and to food, medical care and education and the necessary social services; and the impediments they pose to investments and the trade sector, which is the engine of development.

In assessing the international response to United Nations recommendations prohibiting the imposition of such measures, particularly at a time when we are attempting to create an ambitious post-2015 development agenda, it is cause for consternation that the list of States affected by such measures continues to grow. It includes Cuba, Syria, Palestine, Iran, the Sudan, Venezuela, Belarus, the Russian Federation, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Zimbabwe and others. By the same token, the list of States in violation of the relevant United Nations resolutions is also growing. The United States of America and the European Union, along with their allies such as Australia and Canada, are in the forefront of States and entities imposing such measures against developing States. That demonstrates clearly that they are States that place no value whatsoever on the global consensus rejecting such international behaviour, or on the authority of the United Nations and its resolutions on this matter. On the contrary, they deliberately ignore the disastrous impact of such measures on human rights in the affected States.

The Syrian Arab Republic has been suffering from the effects of unilateral economic measures taken by the United States of America since 2003. Those measures cover a number of areas, including financial transactions, banks and the export to Syria of equipment, including medical equipment and medicines. They also prevent the maintenance and supply of necessary spare parts for Syrian civilian aircraft. The scope of the measures imposed on Syrian individuals and institutions expanded and intensified during 2011, which saw the launching of a systematic terrorist campaign against Syria. The European Union, the United States of America and the League of Arab States, in addition to several Governments of States belonging to the so-called Group of Friends of the Syrian People, have imposed

successive packages of unilateral coercive economic measures against the economic sectors most vital for the support of national resources such as oil, electricity, trade, investment and finance. Those measures are exacerbating the suffering and need of Syrians, and magnifying the effects of the destruction and the decline in the humanitarian, economic, social, cultural, environmental and health sectors caused by the activities of armed terrorist groups that receive full support from some of the very same Governments that are imposing those unilateral economic measures against Syria. As a consequence, millions of Syrians have been displaced and have become refugees.

As a result of those measures, Syria is now facing mounting challenges in a number of areas, including foreign currency supply; trade financing, in particular for imports; the suspension of Syrian financial transactions, whether for personal or commercial purposes; the suspension by certain States of export of their products to Syria; difficulties importing materials and equipment necessary for domestic production; a rise in transport costs; and the loss to the Syrian economy of a large portion of its export revenues, in particular oil revenues. Syria is also suffering from an increase in inflation rates, a rise in commodity prices and difficulties ensuring the supply of commodities, in particular those required for the full implementation of assistance and humanitarian response plans, such as food, medical supplies and medicines. This situation has had a negative impact on the access of Syrians to primary services, the standard of living and the availability of jobs.

Unilateral economic measures imposed against Syria by the European Union are being driven by the policies of those of its Governments with the most radical positions on the Syrian crisis, notably the British and French Governments, and are as damaging as they can possibly be both to the livelihoods of Syrians and to the economy of Syria. Those measures have deliberately targeted the sectors most vital to meeting Syrians' basic needs in a time of great difficulty, and the resources most important for maintaining the public treasury. In resolutions dated 2 and 23 September 2011, the European Union imposed a ban on the import of oil from Syria and prohibited investment and financing in the Syrian oil sector and the delivery to Syria of Syrian-denominated banknotes printed in European Union member States. In its Decision 2013/255/CFSP, the Council of the European Union prohibited any financial, oil-related, technical, economic or technological dealings with any Syrian companies or within Syria. It also prohibited the provision by its members of any technical or financial assistance for the construction of new power plants for the production of electricity in Syria. The European Union has extended those sanctions against Syria until June 2015.

A number of United Nations agencies and development programmes have begun to monitor the disastrous impact of the imposition of unilateral coercive measures against Syria, including in terms of gross domestic product, economic growth, production, job opportunities, income, major commodity prices and trade. Unfortunately, however, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has not yet begun monitoring, or reported on, the disastrous impact of those measures on the standard of living of Syrians or national and United Nations capacities for assistance and humanitarian response to the needs of Syrians.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates the importance of practical and non-selective compliance of the policies and practices of the Governments of all Member States with the principles of international law, the

Charter of the United Nations, multilateral trade law and human rights law. It also stresses the need for immediate compliance with United Nations resolutions calling for a cessation of the imposition of unilateral economic, financial and commercial measures against other States, in particular developing countries, as a means of political and economic coercion. Such compliance would ensure the fulfilment of one of the requirements for achieving sustainable development for all peoples of the world, without exception, allowing them to enjoy the benefits of prosperity and a dignified life.

Tunisia

[Original: English]
[1 May 2015]

Tunisia does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. Tunisia views the imposition of unilateral economic measures as a violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law, particularly the principle of sovereign equality of States. Furthermore, such sanctions are an infringement on the rules governing the multilateral trading system. The negative effect of these sanctions is certain. They seriously hamper the efforts of developing countries to improve the living conditions of their peoples and to achieve development. Tunisia believes that these sanctions generate a very heavy humanitarian cost.

Tunisia has not been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014.

Turkey

[Original: English]
[5 June 2015]

Turkey does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. Only in certain cases may "smart/targeted sanctions" be useful.

Turkey has been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014. Unilateral sanctions, especially those with extraterritorial effects, impact not only the targeted countries, but third countries as well, having an adverse effect on regional economic cooperation, as well as international trade and economic cooperation on a global scale. United States and European Union sanctions imposed on Iran, especially those targeting energy and banking sectors, constitute current examples of sanctions having far-reaching effects, profoundly affecting third countries in the process. Turkey has also been negatively affected by the sanctions imposed against Russia.

Unilateral sanctions imposed on Iran target, among other things, the energy and banking sectors, which unequivocally hurt the economies of many third countries and disrupt legitimate trade. Neighbouring States are affected more directly than others in terms of the adverse effects on trade and development.

We believe that sanctions applied in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations are an important tool for the maintenance of international peace and security. To be credible and effective, they must be targeted carefully and take into account the applicable rights of due process for the individuals concerned and the need to minimize their adverse consequences for third parties. In this sense, "smart sanctions", which target the specific regimes in countries without harming the civilian populations, should be at the heart of the United Nations sanctions system.

Turkey wishes to make a correction to the text of the report of the Secretary-General on unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries (A/68/218), in annex I, page 16. The text should read, "Turkey has been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2010-2012".

United Arab Emirates

[Original: English]
[26 April 2015]

The United Arab Emirates does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. Such actions go against the principles of international law, and have proven to be a failure.

The United Arab Emirates has not been affected by economic sanctions during the period 2012-2014.

The United Arab Emirates, based on the principles of international law embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and the fundamental principles of the multilateral trading system, does not apply any sanctions or unilateral economic measures as a means of political coercion or economic against any other country, since it is proven that such measures have a negative political and economic impact on the people of the targeted developing countries.

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

[Original: English and Spanish]
[24 April 2015]

Venezuela does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. Such measures are against the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States. In particular they are an attack on respect for equal rights among States, the self-determination of peoples and non-interference in internal affairs, as well as the inalienable right of States to choose their political, economic, social and cultural systems, without the interference of another State. The imposition of such measures can affect the normal political, economic, social and cultural development of the country under them, and is an attack on the human rights of its people.

Venezuela has been affected by economic sanctions. On 9 March 2015, the Government of the United States adopted Executive Order No. 13692, in which

Mr. Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, declared a national emergency in order to face "the situation in Venezuela", including the situation of the Government, that "constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States". The Bolivarian Government believes that the report to be presented by the Secretary-General must go beyond the mere quantification and declaration of measures, modes and types and the identification of countries that have imposed sanctions and those that have been subjected to them. Moreover, the report has to address the illegal and unlawful character of sanctions, in compliance with international law, emphasizing that they run counter to the spirit and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and of countless General Assembly declarations and resolutions that condemn their adoption, and given the negative effect of sanctions on the peoples of those countries under them, including the violation of human rights. At the same time, the report must request States, in strong terms, to refrain from resorting to such measures in an attempt to break the will of a developing country.

Zimbabwe

[Original: English]
[18 May 2015]

Zimbabwe does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. Zimbabwe believes in the resolution of differences through dialogue. Unilateral economic measures constitute a violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations as well as of international law. The sanctions also constitute a blunt instrument that often hurts the economies and citizens of targeted poor nations.

Zimbabwe has been under economic sanctions imposed by the United States of America and the European Union since the year 2001.

Economic and financial sanctions have been imposed by the United States of America since 2001. The sanctions were imposed through the adoption of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001. The sanctions bill is still binding. Under section 4 (c) of the Act, the United States Government instructs United States executive directors in all international financial institutions to oppose and vote against: (a) any extension by the respective institutions of any loan, credit or guarantee to the Government of Zimbabwe; (b) any cancellation or reduction of indebtedness owed by the Government of Zimbabwe to the United States or any other international financial institution.

Economic and financial sanctions have been imposed by the European Union since 2002. The sanctions restrict trade between Zimbabwe and the European Union. The impacts of the sanctions are: severe economic distress; decline in Zimbabwe's balance of payments support; sustained decline in offshore financing; sustained decline in long-term capital; the decline of infrastructure; poor performance of the health, education and other social services owing to the withdrawal of donor support; rapid decline in levels of foreign direct investment and growth; negative impacts on regional cooperation, i.e., the Southern African Development Community and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa; and constraints on the country's policy space.

Annex II

Summary of replies received from United Nations bodies and international organizations

Economic Commission for Africa

[Original: English]
[23 April 2015]

The Economic Commission for Africa does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries if it is not in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 68/200.

The Commission reports that Mali, Guinea Bissau, Zimbabwe, Uganda and, to an extent, Madagascar have been affected by economic sanctions during 2012-2014.

The member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) imposed diplomatic, economic and financial sanctions against Mali immediately after the military's coup d'état in March 2012. At the same time, the African Union imposed political sanctions and the United States of America suspended its official development assistance to the Government. The effectiveness of the sanctions are indisputable, as the landlocked country depends on imports and the use of neighbouring countries' ports for economic activities. Consequently, the military enforced the re-establishment of constitutional order shortly after the sanctions were imposed.

In Guinea-Bissau, ECOWAS imposed sanctions in April 2012 after the military's coup d'état overthrew the interim President. The European Union imposed travel bans and asset freezes on key figures in the military, and the United States suspended approximately half of its $140 million in foreign aid. ECOWAS sanctions were effective, as they were relieved within a two-month period under the condition that the transitional Government ensure a definitive return to constitutional normality. Subsequently, the European Union granted €160 million to consolidate democracy, strengthen the rule of law and accelerate economic recovery in the country.

The case of Zimbabwe is complex, as there are differences of opinion as regards whether sanctions are imposed to coercively pursue democratization in the country or merely to punish it for previous deeds. As a result, some of the main trade partners, including Australia, Canada, the European Union and the United States, have enforced trade embargoes, while United Nations sanctions target illicit trade of high-value commodities such as diamonds.

In 2013, Uganda signed the Anti-Homosexuality Act, which further criminalizes homosexuality. The Act was condemned by the international community, and Uganda lost millions in foreign aid primarily from the United States and the European Union. Over 20 per cent of its budget comes from donors, and future aid cuts will therefore have a direct effect on the economy. The suspension of preferential trade agreements, such as the American Growth and Opportunity Act, may have an effect on economies similar to that of trade embargoes.

Madagascar was one of the nations that suffered most, as its exports were suspended from 2009 to 2014 owing to the domestic turmoil in the country in 2009, having larger negative impacts on the economy than the political turmoil itself.

The African Union frequently imposes sanctions on member States when unconstitutional changes of government occur on the continent. The sanctions consist primarily of political restrictions and, at times, economic embargoes as well. In the context of preventive diplomacy, the United Nations works closely with regional organizations to prevent disputes from arising or, in the event of conflicts, limit their escalation and spread. The extent to which the United Nations Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (and the regional economic communities) harmonize and coordinate affects domestic and international security, and therefore improved synergy is called for between the two for sanctions to be more efficient. The cases of Mali and Guinea-Bissau are prime examples of a regional economic community's interventions leading to further stability in the countries concerned.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

[Original: English]
[23 April 2015]

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries.

ESCWA has observed that Syria has been affected by sanctions imposed by Arab countries, Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States since 2011. The effect of the sanctions cannot be completely isolated and assessed without taking into consideration the overall impact of the four-year conflict on the social and economic conditions in Syria and its neighbouring countries.

To illustrate, the unilateral measures by the European Union have been targeted as follows: financial transactions with the European Investment Bank; assets freeze and visa ban; arms embargo; trade restriction on oil; trade restriction on dual-use goods; and embargo on cargo flights.

In 2011, the immediate economic consequences of the protests were the collapse in revenues from tourism and the drop in private investments. With the escalation into an armed conflict, the Syrian economy has experienced a sharp decline in gross domestic product with the contraction in productive activities and trade, worsened by the looting and destruction of manufacturing facilities, and the resulting reduction in government tax revenues. A severe deterioration has also occurred in the main financial indicators.

The overall impact of the conflict on the Syrian State and population is unprecedented in terms of humanitarian and social crisis: tremendous human losses; 7.6 million internally displaced persons and 3.8 million refugees in neighbouring countries; deterioration in health-care conditions and an increase in the child mortality rate; decrease in primary education; scarcity of essential commodities and public services; destruction and damage to more than 2 million housing units and to large parts of the country's infrastructure asset base. At the end of 2014,

unemployment was above 60 per cent, with more than half of the population living below the poverty line and relying on emergency aid from foreign donors. The steep depreciation of the Syrian pound, the increase in the price of petroleum products subject to sanctions, and the general price inflation have affected mainly vulnerable and poor households, weakening their food security and their standard of living.

The original and declared political goals of the European Union sanctions were to increase pressure on the authorities to put an end to the violence, withdraw the army of the Syrian Arab Republic from besieged towns and cities, implement democratic reforms and engage in an inclusive national dialogue. The ultimate goal was a national political transition away from the current governing structure. None of these goals has been achieved.

The political aim of sanctions can be broken down into five intermediate objectives: impose personal and economic consequences for the authorities and State officials; isolate the authorities and the country; inflict economic hardship; weaken the cohesion within the authorities' power structures; and decrease the support of the population for the governing authorities.

While economic hardship is indisputable, the impact on the balance of power and on the course of the conflict has not been as initially envisaged. Very few of the blacklisted businessmen have switched to the opposition; beneficiaries of the current structure are more entrenched; new businessmen and intermediaries have emerged and have enjoyed financial gains; and part of the business community and the middle class have relocated to neighbouring countries and the rest of the region. The sanctions have inadvertently contributed to these dynamics, creating significant new economic relationships and networks that thrive on incentives for the continuation of the conflict rather than for the support of a peace process. Furthermore, the authorities have been able to benefit from increasing economic support from external backers such as Iran and Russia.

The economy of war has expanded with the fragmentation of the country and of the Syrian economy between areas controlled by the Government, the opposition and the extremist groups of Al Nusra and the Islamic State, with new dynamics of authority among local actors for the control of natural and economic resources. In particular, the shift in control of certain oil and gas production areas and facilities outside of the influence of the central Government has had several consequences: an increase in the dependence of the Government on external backers; the development of a black market and oil export activities to other trading partners; and coordination between the Government and opposing groups over the exchange of hydrocarbon products. The relatively limited destruction and damage to energy facilities and the related infrastructure demonstrate the shared interests of all sides of the conflict in safeguarding these strategic assets even in the current desolate landscape of the country.

The Syrian Arab Republic is facing existential, economic, security and social threats. The continued deterioration of State institutions and the faltering ability of the public administration to provide essential goods and services is not only lowering the standard of living of the Syrian population further, but also driving individuals and communities towards sectarianism and fundamentalism. Specific planning and action to reverse these trends are critical in order to avoid the complete disintegration of the Syrian Arab Republic into a failed State. Towards this strategic objective, a revised approach to economic sanctions is needed, preserving

the viability of State institutions and public administration in supplying essential goods and services, and acknowledging the importance of local stakeholders in providing essential products and services.

When advocating a new approach to sanctions based on the urgent humanitarian and institutional crisis, strong international support is necessary. The peace initiative of the United Nations Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria can provide the political and diplomatic platform required: "modified economic sanctions" can serve as a negotiating instrument to incentivize all parties to focus on improving the conditions of the Syrian population and deliver on the immediate objective of de-escalating the conflict. In the broader context, this concerted effort should aim to preserve Syria's unity and sovereignty while laying the groundwork for the emergency aid phase towards the country's post-conflict reconstruction and economic recovery.

The primary focus should be on the supply of essential goods and commodities and the re-establishment some form of self-sustainable economic recovery going forward. The easing of banking restrictions should complement the relaxation of trade restrictions. Additional key aspects are funding requirements and potential sources. Facilitating the repatriation of private capital and businesses should also be part of the new policy measures aimed at dismantling Syria's war economy structures and kick-starting job creation, with particular attention to the energy sector, to support longer-term post-conflict reconstruction.

The proposal is to design, implement and monitor the retargeting and re-engineering of the economic sanctions imposed on Syria to address the urgent needs of the Syrian people through mechanisms involving United Nations agencies, other international organizations and development partners, particularly the European Union.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

[Original: English]
[28 April 2015]

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) does not agree with the imposition of unilateral economic measures as instruments of political and economic coercion against developing countries. The attention of States parties is drawn to the Doha Mandate (TD/500/Add.1), adopted at the third United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held in April 2012.

UNCTAD reports that the United States embargo against Cuba has had significant negative effects on the Cuban economy and on the standard of living of Cuban citizens. The Government of Cuba reports that at current prices the embargo has inflicted damage worth more than $116,888 million. The losses are attributed to the additional costs incurred by the Cuban Government, enterprises and citizens in obtaining goods, services and finance. The embargo severely limits Cuba's development of strategic sectors such as science and technology, as well as of industries such as information systems and communications. In cases where embargo measures are applied extraterritorially, third countries can be affected in their businesses and investments.